

## REMARKS

The Examiner has found multiple inventions claims and has required an election of claims and thereafter an election among species.

The examiner finds Group I claims 1-13, 19, and 21-22, to be drawn to a protection system for autorack railcars; Group II claims 14-18 and 20 to be drawn to a method of preparing a transport for receiving a load.

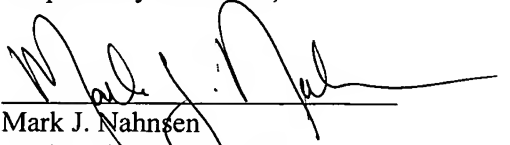
Applicants hereby elect to prosecute Group I claims 1-13, 19 and 21-22, while holding the claims of Group II in abeyance for the filing of a divisional application therefore at a later date.

The Examiner finds that fig. 2, fig 4, fig. 10, fig. 11, fig. 17 and fig. 20 each define patentably distinct species that require a single election under 35 U.S.C. §121 and requires an election of a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits. Applicants hereby elect the species depicted in figs. 19 and 20. Claims 21, 22 (original) and 23 (added) are readable on the species depicted in figs. 19 and 20. New claim 23 is generic to cover each of the identified species. Applicants also elect the railcar configuration species depicted in fig. 9. Claims 1-8, and 21-23 are readable on the species depicted in fig. 9. Applicants further elect fastener species of fig. 15. Claims 1-13, 19 and 21-23 are readable on the species depicted in fig. 15.

Accordingly, prompt examination on the merits of claims 1-13, 19, and 21-23 is solicited. Applicants believe that these claims patentably over the prior art and requests that they be allowed and moved onward to issuance.

Date: May 13, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

  
Mark J. Nahsen  
Registration No.: 51,093  
Barnes & Thornburg  
P.O. Box 2786  
Chicago, Illinois 60690-2786  
312-368-1300